

NEWS from

DENNIS HANSBERGER

San Bernardino County Supervisor, Third District



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County Better Equipped for Communication During Crisis

The San Bernardino County Office of Emergency Services (OES), a division of the Fire Department, has obtained an important new tool – 70 new tools to be exact – to enhance the county’s emergency management and response. Using almost \$100,000 of Homeland Security Grant money, the Office of Emergency Services purchased 70 satellite phones, the majority of which will be given to each of the law, fire and emergency management jurisdictions within the county’s expansive boundaries.

“I am very pleased that the County was able to secure funding to purchase these phones so we can be better prepared and equipped in dealing with emergency situations,” said Third District Supervisor Dennis Hansberger.

The Office of Emergency Services secured the funding for the Satellite Phone Project out of the FY2006 Homeland Security Grant Program. On November 7, 2006 the County Board of Supervisors approved the allocation amount of \$96,973 to initiate and complete the project. The satellite phones will enhance the ability of the county’s many varied and widespread jurisdictions and disciplines to communicate and operate cohesively during an emergency.

OES will maintain a database with the contact information for each of the phones to improve interoperability between jurisdictions. Interoperability is an important concept for public safety officials because first responders and emergency managers need to be able to communicate during a wide-scale disaster. The phones are intended to help entities communicate across local, county, state and federal boundaries.

In the Third District, satellite phones were distributed to Big Bear City, Big Bear Lake, Grand Terrace, Loma Linda, Redlands, Running Springs, San Bernardino, Yucca Valley, the Sheriff’s, Public Health and Public Works departments. OES staff began distributing satellite phones to the jurisdictions on Thursday, February 7, 2008.

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